Embrace the Future: Unfolding a New Chapter with a Fresh Vision

The Global NEW LIGHT of MYANMAR

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Speed boats which transport travellers to Myeik Archipelagos are anchored in Myeik, Taninthayi Region.

Taninthayi Region draws significant influx of domestic, international tourists in Jan-Sept 2023

Kawthoung has witnessed a total of 105,000 local travellers and 15,000 foreign tourists during the nine months of 2023.

The Taninthayi Region, particularly Kawthoung, has witnessed a significant influx of both domestic and international tourists with a total of 105,000 local travellers and 15,000 foreign tourists during the nine-month period spanning from January to September 2023, said Deputy Director U Hlwan Moe of the Taninthayi Region Directorate of Hotels and Tourism.

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Mandalay to host World Education Expo Myanmar on 10-11 Oct

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Taunggyi Tazaungdine Photo Contest offers K5 million for first-prize winner

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Sugarcane price set to rise as local demand surge

Myitsone Resort project set to improve Kachin State tourism industry

In a groundbreaking initiative slated for the 2023-24 financial year, a plan is underway to diligently establish an exceptional resort at the Myitsone, a prominent area in the Kachin State, where the Maykha and Malikha rivers converge, according to the Kachin State Tourism Entrepreneurs Association.

The envisioned Myitsone resort promises to be a haven for tourists. Among the upgrades planned, traditional restaurants will serve as culinary havens, offering travellers an opportunity to savor authentic local cuisine. Additionally, traditional souvenir shops will showcase exquisitely crafted arts and crafts, providing visitors with an opportunity to take home a piece of Kachin State's rich cultural heritage.

Beyond gastronomic and retail offerings, the resort will feature a playground and river cruise options for travellers to explore the natural beauty of the Maykha and Malikha rivers. Adventurous souls can partake in thrilling zip line adventures, while those seeking a romantic escape will

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Food stalls seen in a row to accommodate travellers for a while at Myitsone, the confluence of Maykha and Malikha rivers.

NATIONAL

Relief supplies sent to Rakhine State for rescue and relief process in disaster-affected areas

AS the transport committee under the National Disaster Management Committee supervises sending of relief supplies to Rakhine State by ship, air and car, MV Mercury Force carrying assistance and relief items left The Myanmar Terminal (TMT) for Sittway Township on 7 October.

The assistance and relief supplies weighing 1,347.03 tonnes of construction materials comprised 504.78 tonnes of iron rods, 40,000 corrugated iron sheets, 28,002 plain sheets, 150 tonnes of lip channel, 26,000 light weight bricks, 80.37 tonnes of timber, 3.88 tonnes of medicines and medications and three vehicles donated by the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation and the Ministry of Health.

MV Wirupakkha carried 36,000 bags of rice and 100 tonnes of iron sheets totalling 1,900 tonnes, leaving TMT jetty for Sittway. — MNA/MKKS

Vessels carrying relief materials for victims of cyclone Mocha depart Rakhine State from Yangon on 7 October.

WEATER REPORT

Flood Bulletin

(Issued at 14:00 hrs MST on 8-10-2023)

Flood Condition of Bago River

ACCORDING to the (13:30) hrs MST observation today, the water level of Bago River at Bago has exceeded by more than 2½ feet (83 cm) above its danger level. It may continue to rise the present water level by about 3 feet during the next one day and may remain above its danger level.

Advisory

It is especially advised to the people who settle near the river banks and low lying areas at Bago Township, to take precaution measure.

COVID-19 report, 8 October 2023

NEW TESTS	5,649
NEW CASE	0
CASUALTIES	0

Mandalay to host World Education Expo Myanmar on 10-11 Oct

THE World Education Expo Myanmar 2023 organized by Dragon Exhibitions Limited is scheduled to convene on 10 and 11 October in Mandalay, said U Nay Oke, chair of a private school association and also an organizer of the event.

The similar event in Mingala Taungnyunt Township of Yangon, participated by 29 local and international schools as exhibitors with 40 booths, was convened on 7 and 8 October at Wyndham Grand Yangon Hotel.

"We had similar expos before and this year event seems to be more vibrant and I feel grateful to organizers for implementing this educational exhibition. This kind of events is needed for our country where many education service providers including some fake schools are operating. In this expo, international universities also participated," U Nay Oke said.

In the exposition convened in Yangon, U Thet Tun Oo, Executive Senior Manager from Yangon Stock Exchange, U Thein Myint Wai, a trade expert and author and U Thurein Nyein, founder and managing director of Myanmar Resources Network, made a seminor that presented about 21st Century Education. — ASH/TH

File photo shows an Education Expo in Myanmar.

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NATIONAL

MoH specialists conduct medical outreach in Kengtung, Shan State

A specialist team from Yangon General Hospital, Specialist Hospital (500-bed), Eye Specialist Hospital and Otorhinolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery Specialist Hospital in collaboration with medics from Kengtung General Hospital performed medical treatments for residents in Shan State on 7 and 8 October.

During their two-day visit, the medical team provided treatments to 204 patients with heart diseases, 134 neurological patients, 31 neurosurgical patients, 53 patients with liver diseases, 29 patients with blood diseases, 110 with diabetes and nephrological conditions, 260 orthopaedic patients, 93 with skin disease, 96 gastroenteritis patients, 106 with general conditions, 207 patients with eye disorders, 81 patients with ear, nose and throat conditions, 63 patients with orthopaedic diseases, 15 patients with surgery conditions, 14 child patients, four dental patients and three patients with physiological conditions, totalling 1,503. The specialist team made medical examinations for the patients with the aid of respective diagnosis machines.

Apart from patients in Shan State, those from 12 townships of Shan State were also benefitted from the treatment of mobile specialist team.

In addition, arrangements were made for the transfer of one patient who needed further treatment for neurologic, two patients for neurosurgery, four patients for heart disease and one orthopaedic patient who needed treatment at Yangon General Hospital and Specialist Hospital (500-bed).

The specialist teams have treated three times in Sittway, Rakhine State and similar programmes have already been conducted in Pathein, Taunggyi, Magway, Pyay, Meiktila, Myeik, Mawlamyine, Myitkyina and Hinthada townships. And this initiative will cover other regions and states. — MNA/KZL

A medical specialist pays treatment to a patient in Kengtung, Shan State.

Daily newspapers available online

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News and Periodicals Enterprise

Union Minister for Electric Power U Nyan Tun looks into a control room of power station during his electricity generation industry inspection trip in Yangon.

Hlawga main power station in Mingaladon Township to get transformers

IN the electricity generation industry, plans are underway to install more transformers at Hlawga main power station in Mingaladon Township of Yangon Region, according to Director-General of the Electric Power Transmission and System Control Department, U Thura Aung Bo.

Yesterday afternoon, Union Minister for Electric Power U Nyan Tun heard reports on the power transmission and distribution conditions of the Hlawga main power station by the director-general at the Hlawga natural gas power plant.

After the presentation, the Union Minister stressed the need to systematically operate the stations with maintenance before building new ones. He pointed out that systematic maintenance schedule must be schemed for the regular operation of machinery.

At the control rooms, the Union Minister inspected supply of electricity in connection with the national grids, operation of power stations, and generating electricity by Myanmar Central Power Co Ltd and UPP Power (Myanmar) Ltd. — MNA/KZW

Illegal goods seized in various townships

UNDER the supervision of the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee, illegal trade is effectively prevented and prosecuted in accordance with the law.

During the inspection by the customs teams under the management of the Customs Department, 24 types of illegal goods were seized from six containers at the Asia World container inspection station and one Nissan diesel truck valued at K35 million transporting illegal goods from Muse to Mandalay was also seized at the Yaypu permanent checkpoint on 6 October.

Next more illegal goods were seized at Mayanchaung checkpoint and action was taken against offenders in accordance with customs procedures.

A confiscated illegal foodstuff package is seen in Kayin State.

Subsequently, officials made further inspections in Sagain Region, Shan State, Kayin State, Mandalay Region and Rakhine State on 7 October and seized illegal items including edible oil, vehicles, furniture and soft drinks.

Therefore, total number of arrests on 6 and 7 October was in 25 cases (approximately K747,231,300) according to the Illegal Trade Eradication Steering Committee. — MNA/KZL

NATIONAL

Shwemawdaw Pagoda in Bago to arrange lighting festival

Officials of Bago Region are arranging to hold lighting festival at Shwemawdaw Pagoda.

A lighting festival including donation event for 5,000 Buddhist monks will be conducted at Shwemawdaw Pagoda, Bago Township, Bago Region on the full moon day of Thadingyut, according to U Aye Maung Kyi, Secretary of the Bago Region Government.

A total of 10,000 oil lamps will be lit at the event, and the market fair will last for three days from 28 to 30 October.

"Oil lamp lighting ceremony is held yearly at Bago's Shwemawdaw Pagoda and it will be held in the morning and evening of 29 October, the full moon day of Thadingyut. Similarly, The lighting festival and market fair will be held at the same time.

"The event will be launched along the west archway of the pagoda by illuminating colourful lights. Shin Upagutta image will be kept on the raft in the moat near the pagoda starting 29 October. And then, ceremonies to set the Upagutta image and oil lamps adrift of water will take place on 30 October," he added.

The festival will feature a market fair where MSME products will be displayed and sold, and local products will be introduced to consumers across the country. The Festival-goers will be entertained by Myanma Orchestra. — ASH/KZL

Respect paid to veteran theatrical performers at National Theatre (Yangon) for third time

The ceremony to pay respect to veteran theatrical performers in progress in Yangon yesterday.

THE third annual ceremony to pay respect to veteran theatrical performers from all over Myanmar was held at the National Theatre (Yangon) in Dagon Township, Yangon Region, on 7 October, according to U Nay Win, secretary of the Myanmar Theatrical Association (Central). It has been reported that 1,050 veteran theatrical performers, aged 75 years and above from various theatrical strata, were honoured with K100,000 each and other gifts.

Artistes from music, Myanmar orchestra, drama, Ramayana, traditional puppet, magic, mediums and various other forms are participating in the field of theatrical arena. The first respect-paying ceremony was held in Yangon in 2018 and the second ceremony in Mandalay in 2019. The third time ceremony was scheduled to be held in Hpa-an of Kayin State but it failed to hold the ceremony due to outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic. — ASH/KZW

Bamar-Viet Nam Trade Fair 2023 to be hold at Junction City, Yangon on 1 November

THE Bamar-Viet Nam Trade Fair 2023 will take place at Junction City in Dagon Township, Yangon on 1 November. This trade fair is co-organized by the Union of Myanmar Bamar Ethnic Entrepreneurs Association (UMBEEA) and Vietnam Trade office in Myanmar, according to UMBEEA, one of associations organizing the trade fair.

The trade fair will be held at the promotion area of the Junction City, starting at 9 am on 1 November 2023. The event will display a wide range of products including foodstuffs and beverages, household and consumer goods, electronic devices, mechanical equipment, farm and construction machinery, clothing and garments, fuel oil, lubricants and other products from Viet Nam and Myanmar. There will be over 20 booths at the event.

The entrance fee for the exhibition is free and entertainment programmes will also be arranged for the visitors. — ASH/KZL

A screenshot captures essential information about the Bamar-Viet Nam Trade Fair 2023.

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NATIONAL

Myitsone Resort project set to improve Kachin State tourism industry

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find solace in the enchanting wedding garden. As part of short-term plans, the resort will also offer demonstrations on creating decorative works using the vibrant Myitsone pebbles, as well as provide gold panning experiences, allowing visitors to immerse themselves in local traditions.

Looking ahead to the long-term vision, the Myitsone resort will introduce exhilarating hot-air balloon rides and the construction of a spectacular glass bridge spanning the Maykha and Malikha rivers. These additions are set to enhance the resort's allure, promising guests unforgettable moments amid the breathtaking natural scenery.

To ensure ease of access for visitors, the resort will boast a sprawling 20-acre car park near Tanphare Village, accessible from the Myitkhyina-Sumprabum-PutaO road. Furthermore, the resort's footprint will extend along the riverbank, harmonizing with the surrounding landscape. Notably, this development will also generate employment opportunities for local residents, providing a significant boost to the region's economy.

The Kachin State Tourism Entrepreneurs Association, building on their past successes, recently established the Nawngtalaw mid-streamed island resort in the 2022-23 financial year. — TWA/TTA

Local and foreign travellers climbing up religious monument for enjoying scenic beauties of environments in an ancient area.

A Fam Trip for Russian tourists planned this month

IN a bid to develop the tourism market in Myanmar, an invitation programme (Fam Trip) for Russian tourists will start in the fourth week of October, with 30 Russian tourists visiting 14 destinations in Myanmar, according to U Tin Tun Aung, the director of the Rakhine State Directorate of Hotels and Tourism under the Ministry of Hotels and Tourism.

"After their trip, many Russian tourists are expected to visit Myanmar, so preparations are being made in various tourist destinations. Another thing is that Russian tourists love to travel to mountainous areas and beaches, so we have made more preparations for both sea and mountain side trips. In hotels, motels, and guesthouses, we are conducting basic Russian spoken language courses and recruiting Russian-speaking tour guides. Similarly, Indian and Chinese tourists have also been given VOA, so we expect them to visit more in the next tourism season than in the past," U Tin Tun Aung said.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism has released 14 destinations that local and foreign tourists should visit during the next tourism season on a priority. These areas include historic temples, stupas and ancient buildings, famous for their cultural heritage as well as natural landscapes in Myanmar. Those 14 tourist destinations comprise Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Mandalay, Bagan, Ngwehsaung, Chaungtha, Ngapali, PyinOoLwin, Inlay, Kalaw-Taunggyi, Kawthoung, Kyaukpyu, Manaung and PutaO. — ASH/TH

Taninthayi Region draws significant influx of domestic,...

A beautiful scene of island in the Myeik Archipelago attracting local and international travellers.

FROM PAGE-1

Traditionally, visitors explore the charming destinations of Dawei, Myeik, Kawthoung, and Bokpyin areas of the Taninthayi Region. To cater to this growing tourism, the region boasts a total of 2,383 rooms distributed across 49 hotels and 11 lodges, offering diverse accommodation options for travellers.

U Hlwan Moe elaborated on the tourism trends, stating, "The Taninthayi Region has seen a substantial influx of visitors, with around 105,000 local travellers and approximately 15,000 foreign tourists visiting in the nine-month period. Among the region's prominent destinations, Kawthoung stands out as a favorite among Thai tourists, closely followed by Chinese tourists. Their preferences for destinations vary." He further explained, "Dawei area attracts primarily pilgrims, while Myeik region is currently more appealing to local travellers. These local travellers seek tours that not only encompass pagoda visits but also include sightseeing along maritime routes. In contrast, Kawthoung region is known for its maritime tour offerings."

Currently, the Myeik Archipelagos, comprising more than 800 small and large islands, have captured the attention of both local and foreign tourists. Among these islands, more than 40 are accessible to visitors, with some reachable within a day's trip from Myeik. Additionally, travellers can explore eight islands of them in a four-night and five-day excursion. As tourism continues to thrive in the Taninthayi Region, the stunning natural beauty, cultural richness, and diverse offerings of these destinations are expected to draw even more travellers in the coming months. — ASH/TTA

NATIONAL

Taunggyi Tazaungdine Photo Contest offers K5 million for first-prize winner

A photo contest will be included in the Taunggyi Tazaungdine Hot-air Balloon Festival in Taunggyi of Shan State, and the first prize winner will get K5 million as cash award, according to the Photo Contest Organizing and Prize Selection Committee.

The festival will last for seven days from 21 to 27 November, according to the Southern Shan State Traditional Hot-air Balloon Professionals Association.

Those wishing to participate in the color photo contest can submit four 12x18 inches entries taken at the festival to the committee. A soft copy CD must be attached to the printed colour photographs. Myanmar citizens can participate in the contest. Entries must be sent to the committee by 4 pm on 6 December.

The first prize winner will be presented K5 million while the second prize winner will have K4 million. The third prize winner will get K3 million and K1 million each will be given to special prize winners according to committee. — TWA/KZL

The breathtaking view of the previous year's Taunggyi Tazaungdine Hot-air Balloon Festival.

FDA notifies customers of inappropriate use for 12 cosmetic products

THE Department of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recently issued a press release, saying that the public should not use 12 items of cosmetic products containing prohibited chemicals.

The FDA inspected cosmetic products being sold locally and found 12 types of unregistered cosmetic products. These products contain ingredients of prohibited chemicals that could pose hazards to users. As a result, these products are inappropriate for the people.

These prohibited chemicals can cause skin irritation, inflammation, resulting in red and white spots, and can be absorbed into the body through the skin. They may also lead to muscle tremours, fatigue, headaches, and depression. Long-term use of these cosmetics can result in kidney damage and other diseases.

These unregistered products must not be imported and distributed under the restrictions of the Food and Drug Administration. If not, relevant authorities will take action against those who do not comply with restrictions, under Section 3 (d) of the Public Health Law. — TWA/KZW

Fire brigade members evacuate flood victims to monasteries in Bago on 8 October.

Bago opens 29 temporary flood relief centres

SINCE the morning of 8 October, the Yangon-Mandalay Highway has been flooded due to continuous heavy rains, and 29 temporary evacuation centres have been opened in Bago City.

Yesterday morning, 29 relief centres were opened in 11 flood affected wards and six villages.

Officials and donors are providing drinking water, foods and medicines to the flood victims at the camps. Additionally, officials arrange safety of vehicles and people along the roads.

The Bago River reached 940 cm of water level exceeding 880 cm danger level of Bago city. Currently, water is flowing into low-lying areas of the township.

Furthermore, heavy rains caused flooding in Kawsannaing Ward of Kyaikto Township of Mon State. As such, searching and rescue teams of Ktaikto Township Fire Station, auxiliary fire brigade members and relevant organizations evacuated flood victims to the safer places. — TWA/KZW

Private schools following basic education curriculum for 2024-25 AY need to take registration by October

IN the 2024-2025 academic year, the Ministry of Education has notified that private schools using the basic education curriculum should apply for registration by 31 October.

Those wishing to establish new private schools and renew licences in addition to renewal of school licences, upgrade of school levels, change of founder names, change of school locations, expansion of locations and change of school names need to take registration forms from relevant region and state education offices.

As such, they have to submit applications to the respective region and state education offices, not later than 31 October.

In May 2023, a new private education law was enacted. In the occurrences of violations against the rules and regulations at private schools, imprisonment is set from a minimum of six months term to two years, and fines are ranged from K3 million to K50 million. — TWA/KZW

Photo shows the Mandalay Region Education Office.

Sugarcane price set to rise as local demand surge

A sugar mill in Shan State has been purchasing one tonne of sugarcane at a price of K120,000 starting 3 October and has also offered to buy 6,500/7,000 tonnes of sugarcane per day, according to a notice by the mill to the merchants and sugarcane farmers.

The sugar mill also encouraged farmers in the notice to grow more sugarcane as the mill is installing two more units with the aim of producing sugar by crushing 7,500 tonnes of sugarcane per day in 2024-2025 financial year and 12,000 tonnes of sugarcane per day in 2025-2026 FY.

Before 2021, when a viss of sugar wholesale price was K900, the mill purchases one tonne of sugarcane at around K38,000. Four years later, when a viss of sugar is priced at K3,800/3,820, the price for a tonne of sugarcane rose to K120,000.

The sugar price in global market in July was US$650 per tonne which was down from US$700 in June this year. Last year, a tonne of sugar at global market was around US$600. Sugarcane farmers earn more from their produce as the price of sugarcane increases with the increase of sugar price. — TWA/TH

A sugarcane farmer is seen reaping his crops.

Onion prices drop amid high stocks, weak foreign demand

THE prices of onions stay low in the domestic market amid the high stocks and weak demand by foreign buyers.

The small onions were priced at approximately K2,000 while the price of larger ones was around K3,000 in Yangon's wholesale market. The onion prices this year were K500 lower than that of the corresponding period last year.

The onions fetch K1,900-K3,100 per viss depending on size and producing areas such as Myingyan and Seikphyu. Pakokku market saw an influx of nearly 70,000 visses of onions and the highest price was only K2,350 per viss. The baseless rumour of possible foreign demand did not shake up the market. The demand from exporters is extremely low so the prices continue to drop in the onion-producing areas amid high stocks.

Onion sacks are seen being piled at a warehouse in Bayintnaung Commodity Wholesale Centre on 7 October.

The traders' expectation of a price hike to K4,000 per viss for onions in mid-August 2023 was proven wrong. The highest price in the Yangon market was K3,500 per viss of large onions.

Onion prices were volatile from October 2022 on the back of strong export demand by the Viet Nam and Thailand markets via the Myawady border. The price of large onions peaked at K5,100 per viss on 2 December 2022. Prior to that, the prices stood at K4,800 per viss of monsoon onions and K4,400 for Myingyan onions.

The Yangon market sees a supply of newly harvested monsoon onions only instead of old onion stocks. There is a low chance for the onion price to turn higher owing to the high stocks in the market and global market conditions, a seller shared his opinion. — TWA/EM

The photo shows a Tax Service Unit operated by the Department of Internal Revenue.

Income tax slab for Myanmar citizens living and working abroad released

THE scheme of collecting income tax from Myanmar citizens living and working abroad was released by the Department of Internal Revenue under the Ministry of Planning and Finance on 7 October.

The income tax will be calculated using two methods prescribed in the Law Amending the Union Tax Law 2023.

The two calculation methods include collecting tax depending on the types of income while subtracting the tax exemption under the law, and levying two per cent of tax on income without subtracting the tax exemption.

The amount of income tax paid under the tax laws of the relevant foreign countries will also be deducted by the authorities, allowing taxpayers to pay the least amount of text resulting from the two types of calculations.

The taxpayers must also pay income tax in the form of the foreign currency they received and they are also advised to make inquiries for other details at the Tax Service Units in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon and Mandalay. — TWA/TH

OPINION

Improve postal service to keep abreast of other media

The World Post Day, celebrated on 9 October each year, commemorates the founding of the Universal Postal Union in 1874 in Bern, Switzerland. The UPU Congress in Tokyo, Japan, in 1969 officially designated this day to recognize the vital role of postal services worldwide. Today, nations around the globe join in this annual celebration, often using it as an opportunity to launch or promote new postal offerings.

In 2015, countries worldwide united in their commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, which encompass diverse objectives such as eradicating extreme poverty, combating inequality, and addressing climate change. The postal service plays a significant role in advancing these goals, serving as an essential infrastructure for development. Post offices are instrumental in fostering cohesive, inclusive, and interconnected communities. With over five million postal employees entrusted with delivering critical items like messages, gifts, goods, money, and medicines, the postal service embodies the 2023 theme: "Together for trust: Collaborating for a safe and connected future."

> To align with the evolving media landscape, authorities must prioritize the enhancement of postal services. These services must keep pace with other media forms, serving the best interests of the people. This necessitates an investment in improving the capabilities of postal staff to ensure reliable, secure, and swift delivery of goods, packages, and letters from one location to another.

World Post Day is celebrated in more than 150 countries, often observed as a working holiday in some regions. Many postal services use this occasion to introduce or highlight new products and services while also acknowledging their employees' outstanding contributions.

Despite the rapid expansion of various forms of media, postal services remain indispensable in countries like Myanmar. Here, express delivery services have evolved to include packages and various materials, significantly improving customer accessibility. This development enables people to expedite the delivery of letters and packages across the nation, bridging the gap between the north and south as well as the east and west.

To align with the evolving media landscape, authorities must prioritize the enhancement of postal services. These services must keep pace with other media forms, serving the best interests of the people. This necessitates an investment in improving the capabilities of postal staff to ensure reliable, secure, and swift delivery of goods, packages, and letters from one location to another.

In fact, World Post Day serves as a reminder of the essential role that postal services play in fostering global development and connectivity. As all global people embrace the digital age, it is imperative that postal services evolve and adapt to remain relevant and efficient, meeting the diverse needs of people worldwide. By doing so, everybody can ensure a safe and connected future, fulfilling the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals.

ARTICLE

Urbanization challenges in climate change

Climate change is a global challenge that requires collaboration at multiple levels.

By Saya Norm

Urbanization refers to the process of increasing the population and development of urban areas including the construction of buildings, infrastructure and migration of people from rural to urban areas. On the other hand, climate change refers to the long-term shift in global weather patterns and the resulting changes in temperature, precipitation, sea levels and extreme weather events. Urbanization and climate change are interconnected as urban areas both contribute to and are impacted by climate change.

Urban planning for climate change is often discussed as predominantly a local problem facing local communities with local solutions. This has been largely the case. As the world continues to urbanize and the impact of climate change becomes increasingly locked in for decades to come and now it is also very much a global issue at the highest level. Some argue that climate change isn't the business of world-class organizations such as the UN Security Council. But the fact is great because the climate threat is so massive and so multi-faceted that it's impossible to disentangle it from other challenges that such organizations are facing. It is time to start treating the climate crisis like the urgent security threat that it is. This is literally the challenge of all our generations.

Urban planning for ultimate change provides a transformational opportunity to change the way we live and where we live in our urban future. The challenges of managing urban growth in the context of climate change continue only to increase as cities expand and the world warms from anthropogenic climate change. The challenges are wide-ranging including global climate migration, large-scale urban expansion into lands at climate risks (e.g. floods, storms), increasingly inhabitable urban settlements due to heat and lack of shade, flooding and coastal inundation and the retrofitting of existing urban settlements. There is much to be done.

It is currently estimated that climate migration could be over one billion by 2050, predominantly in the Asian, African and Pacific regions. However, developed nations such as Canada, the USA and Australia are also at risk. It is a tough issue, but the conversation and the planning need to commence now. Key global agencies such as the World Bank, and the Asian Development Bank is actively investigating the impacts of climate change on urban and rural populations that are already or may need to resettle in the near future.

Urban planning for climate change can't be seen in isolation from other major global challenges. The impact on developing countries is enormous and urgent action is required. UN-Habitat estimates that over 880 million people are currently living in informal settlements and these numbers are expected to increase. Urbanization is a significant contributor to climate change as it leads to increased greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption and environmental degradation. However, urbanization also presents an opportunity to implement strategies that could lessen climate change impacts. In a major study, into The World in 2050, it was identified that the following themes will be critical if we are to reach the ultimate goals by 2050.

Many communities are at risk of inundation due to rising sea levels and more frequent and severe storms caused by climate change. **ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK**

The first is retrofitting which should be smart, cost-effective and green. Energy-efficient buildings are also needed. we have to promote the use of sustainable building practices such as energy-efficient design, green roofs, solar panels and efficient insulation. Besides, the construction of green buildings that minimize energy consumption and rely on renewable energy sources should be encouraged. Governments should implement policies and incentives to support distributed generation and promote renewable energy use at the community level.

Gases produced by transport account for 25 per cent of climate change. So, we must try to improve public transport. Investors should make new investments in efficient and well-connected public transport systems to discourage private car ownership and use. This can be achieved through the expansion and integration of bus and rail networks as well as the implementation of policies that prioritize public transport over private vehicles. Using EVs is another option. In some places, we must change the working environment. Encouraging the development of compact walkable cities with mixed land-use and working from home may be helpful. These reduce the need for long commutes and promote the use of public transport, cycling and walking thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

To lessen the impact of climate change, waste management and recycling must be taken into account. Implementing effective waste management systems could reduce the amount of waste going to landfills and encourage recycling and composting. Businessmen should invest in waste-to-energy technologies that can convert organic waste into renewable energy sources. Water conservation measures such as rainwater harvesting, wastewater recycling and efficient irrigation systems may reduce water demand, water pollution, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Key factors which will influence urban planning for climate change in the near future include carbon-neutral developments for cities and towns, coastal planning and management for communities at risk of inundation and partnerships and collaboration to ensure leading practice across the globe. At present, considerable work has been undertaken by urban networks including C40 comprising the mayors of global cities. To counter anthropogenic climate change we must create green spaces and urban forestry. Increasing the provision of green spaces, parks and urban forests within cities may help absorb carbon dioxide and improve air quality. It may also reduce urban heat, confer an island effect and provide ecosystem services.

Globally population change in low-lying cities and settlements will lead to approximately a billion people who are at risk from coastal-specific climate hazards under all scenarios. Unavoidable sea level rise will bring cascading losses to coastal ecosystems and ecosystem services, groundwater salinization, flooding and damages to coastal infrastructure that cascade into risks to livelihoods, settlements, health, well-being, food and water security.

It is estimated that almost 11 per cent of the global population – 896 million people - lived within the low-elevation coastal zone in 2020 would be potentially increased to beyond one billion people by 2050. These communities often contribute significantly to economic productivity through fisheries, tourism and ocean activity and need to be managed very carefully during any transition in adapting climate change.

The global network of professionals, NGOs and academic blend will be successful in implementing the climate objectives with the more traditional institutions of the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, OECD and relevant UN agencies such as UN-Habitat, UNEP and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. But only governments and world organizations are not enough. Community engagement is essential. Foster community engagement and education programs to raise awareness about climate issues and empower individuals to adopt sustainable practices. The programmes may consume capital, and resources and take time.

In the fight against the climate crisis, a collective worldwide effort is needed. As climate change's most devastating impacts do not recognize national borders so that collaboration between different stakeholders including governments, urban planners, developers, businesses and community organizations are critical to implementing integrated strategies that address both urbanization and climate change. It is pleasing to see increasing connections and engagement between the formal and more informal groups to deal with the complexities of the impacts of climate change in urban communities. ■

US records more homegrown malaria cases for first time in 20 years

Public health agencies in affected states will likely enhance surveillance, conduct contact tracing, and educate the public about malaria prevention strategies.

The United States has identified at least 10 locally acquired malaria cases, the first time in 20 years since the highly infectious disease was declared elimination from the country.

The US state of Arkansas identified its first locally acquired malaria case this week, marking the fourth US state that has reported locally acquired cases of one of the world's most dangerous infectious diseases following Florida, Texas and Maryland.

The Arkansas Department of Health identified the locally acquired malaria case in an Arkansas resident, who resides in Saline County and has not traveled out of the country.

This is the only known locally acquired case of malaria in Arkansas.

So far this year, five additional malaria cases have been reported in Arkansas, but all were acquired outside of the country, according to the state health department.

Earlier this year, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported seven cases of locally acquired malaria in Florida, one case in Texas, and one case in Maryland.

Malaria is a serious and potentially fatal disease transmitted through the bite of an infective female anopheline mosquito. People with malaria often experience fever, chills, and flu-like illness. Left untreated, they may develop severe complications and die, according to CDC.

The malaria disease was endemic in the United States until the 1950s. In 1951, malaria was considered eliminated from the country.

For the first time in 20 years, the United States has recorded homegrown malaria cases, said a report of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

Most malaria cases in the United States are imported and occur in people traveling from countries with malaria transmission, many from sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, according to CDC.

However, locally acquired mosquito-transmitted malaria cases can occur, as anopheles mosquito vectors exist throughout the United States, said CDC.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately 2,000 cases of mostly travel-related malaria were diagnosed in the United States each year. Approximately 300 people experienced severe disease, and 5 to 10 people with malaria died yearly, according to CDC.

The risk of locally acquired malaria is very low in the United States, said CDC.

SOURCE: Xinhua

The malaria disease was endemic in the United States until the 1950s. In 1951, malaria was considered eliminated from the country. **ILLUSTRATION: FREEPIK**

SCI/ENVIRON WORLD

Toxic storms blamed on climate change cloud Tajikistan

The issue of sand storms caused by climate change is not limited to Tajikistan but is a concern for the broader Central Asian region.

Dust and sand storms are becoming increasingly frequent across Central Asia, harming its inhabitants. **PHOTO: AFP**

THE air was dry and warm and the skies over Dushanbe were grey without a hint of sun during another recent toxic sand storm that enveloped the capital of Tajikistan.

Storms like this, which experts say are being caused by climate change, are becoming increasingly frequent across Central Asia, harming its inhabitants.

The imposing mountains around Dushanbe were barely visible through the haze and hulks of apartment blocks under construction stood like ghostly apparitions.

Tajikistan was ranked one of the top 10 most polluted countries in the world in the 2022 IQAir air quality index.

"I can't stop coughing. I'm fed up with this dust choking me," Munira Khushkadamova, a teacher, said during a visit to the Sofia clinic in Dushanbe.

For the last two years, the 43-year-old has been suffering from respiratory failure — a diagnosis given to her from her doctor Faical Sakhray.

"In the last few years I have been getting more and more patients with cardiovascular diseases," he told AFP, blaming fine particles from the storms.

"The biggest ones enter the organism and stay in the upper respiratory tract but the finer ones go into the lower respiratory tract, then the lungs, the heart and other organs," he said. — AFP

Amazon launches test satellites in challenge to Musk's Starlink

AMAZON is set to launch its first two satellites on Friday as a test mission for Project Kuiper, marking the e-commerce giant's entry into the space-based internet competition against Elon Musk's Starlink service.

Amazon launched two satellites on Friday as part of its plan to deliver the internet from space and compete with Elon Musk's Starlink service.

The Atlas V rocket carrying the satellites lifted off from Cape Canaveral in Florida at 2:06 pm local time (6:06 pm GMT).

The launch was carried out by the United Launch Alliance (ULA) industrial group, a joint venture between Boeing and Lockheed Martin.

Jeff Bezos says the aim of the satellite project is to provide 'fast, affordable broadband to unserved and underserved communities around the world'. **PHOTO: UNITED LAUNCH ALLIANCE/AFP**

Once up and running, the company founded by Jeff Bezos says its Project Kuiper will provide "fast, affordable broadband to unserved and underserved communities around the world", with a constellation of more than 3,200 satellites in low Earth orbit (LEO).

"We've done extensive testing here in our lab and have a high degree of confidence in our satellite design, but there's no substitute for on-orbit testing," said Rajeev Badyal, Project Kuiper's vice president of technology. — AFP

Traditional methods urged for Morocco quake rebuild

A group of architects is working together to come up with plans for rebuilding the douars. They want to make sure that the new designs respect the traditional architecture of these remote and underserved communities.

HOW do you rebuild and earthquake-proof a centuries-old Moroccan mountain village, at speed, without sacrificing its traditional architecture?

That's a key challenge facing the reconstruction of the country's isolated "douars", which were devastated by a strong 6.8-magnitude earthquake last month.

The September 8 quake, which killed around 3,000 people and injured 5,600, according to the latest official figures, damaged about 60,000 homes across 3,000 villages in the High Atlas mountains and their surroundings.

One month on, the survivors are still living in tents and relying on a field hospital and temporary schools set up by the authorities.

In the meantime, a small army of architects has mobilised and is sketching out ideas on how to reconstruct the douars in a way that respects the traditional architecture of these isolated and largely deprived communities.

Karim Rouissi, a Moroccan architect, has been on investigative trips to around 30 of the villages, in particular those in Al-Haouz — the province most affected by the earthquake.

"Supervised self-build should be encouraged, using local materials," he told AFP. — AFP

The strong 6.8-magnitude earthquake that hit Morocco damaged tens of thousands of homes. **PHOTO: FADEL SENNA**

Chinese scientists collect rock samples atop Mt Cho Oyu

UP along the path from an altitude of 4,950 metres on Mount Cho Oyu, the world's sixth-highest mountain, some fragments of rocks with metal luster shined by the roadside.

"The rock samples here contain rare metal elements and the samples from different altitudes can help us understand the distribution layers of rare metals here," said Liu Xiaochi, an associate researcher from Institute of Geology and Geophysics of Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Liu's expedition team reached the peak of Mount Cho Oyu, also known as Mt Qowowuyag, last Sunday to systematically collect rock samples for the first time in history, hopefully to reveal more about the formation of the Himalayas.

Unlike rock samples which were easily collected on the surface by Liu at the foot of the mountain, rock samples in the peak area were covered deep under snow and ice, making collection extremely difficult. — Xinhua

Japan cooking show recognized by Guinness as longest-running

The cooking show mirrored the changing times, including Japan's shrinking population and family size. **PHOTO : AFP**

A 65-year-old cooking show in Japan has been recognized by Guinness World Records as the longest-running culinary programme, broadcaster NHK said.

Since its inception in 1957, NHK's "Kyo no Ryori," or "Today's Cooking", has featured about 46,600 recipes, often reflecting the zeitgeist of the times from economic downturn to women's empowerment.

"What should I cook for dinner tonight?' is, I think, the perpetual question for everyone," chief producer Mayumi Yanai told reporters Friday as a Guinness certificate was presented at a Tokyo ceremony.

The show aims to "answer that question sincerely and align itself closely to our family audience", she said.

The cooking show reflected Japan's shifting demographics, including a shrinking population and changes in family size.

The cooking show mirrored the changing times, including Japan's shrinking population and family size.

While it originally featured recipes for five people, a family of four later became the standard, before meals for two took over.

In 1957, the show introduced Western-style curry during a time of malnourishment. In the 70s, it offered low-budget recipes due to the oil crisis. In the 80s, it focused on quick meals and "men's dishes" as more women joined the workforce. — AFP

Transgender woman crowned Miss Portugal for first time

A transgender woman has won the Miss Portugal beauty pageant for the first time and will compete with another transgender woman for the Miss Universe title in El Salvador, Portuguese media reported Friday.

Marina Machete, a 28-year-old flight attendant, was awarded the Miss Portugal title on Thursday in Borba, in the southeastern Evora region.

"Proud to be the first trans woman to compete for the title of Miss Universe Portugal," she wrote on social media before winning the title.

"For years it was not possible for me to participate and today I am proud to be part of this incredible group of finalists," she added.

In July, 22-year-old Dutchwoman Rikkie Kolle became the first transgender woman to win the Miss Netherlands title.

Machete and Kolle will succeed Angela Ponce of Spain, who became the first transgender candidate for the Miss Universe title in 2018. — AFP

Marina Machete is the first trans woman to take home the crown as Miss Portugal in the beauty pageant's history. **PHOTO: INSTAGRAM/@ MARINAMACHETEREIS/MISS PORTUGAL**

Iraqis marvel at ancient Iraq in new 'Assassin's Creed' game

The game is set in ninth-century Baghdad during the Abbasid Caliphate era. **PHOTO: AHMAD AL-RUBAYE / AFP**

IRAQI gamers celebrated the release Thursday of the latest instalment of the "Assassin's Creed" action-adventure saga, set in ninth century Baghdad during the Abbasid Caliphate.

In the game, the hooded and stealthy hero fights his way through an ancient maze of alleyways, souks and rooftops, rendered in loving detail with what its creators say is the help of historical sources.

The central character, pickpocket turned master assassin Basim, speaks classical Arabic in "Assassin's Creed Mirage", the 13th edition of the wildly popular franchise published by France-based Ubisoft.

"We were waiting for a game that shows Arab and Islamic culture, the culture and history of Iraq and this region, which does not just consist of wars and terrorism," said one instant fan, Mohammed Bashir.

Sitting in a Baghdad internet cafe, surrounded by fellow gamers, the 30-year-old graphic designer marvelled at the 3D depictions of ancient Iraq and Baghdad.

As the story unfolds and Basim bloodily dispatches a long lineup of foes, the real star is the setting, resplendent with turquoise mosaic domes, carpet sellers and lush oasis towns.

"There's Iraqi music!" exclaimed one young man in the room, lit dimly by screens and fluorescent blue neon lights, where other players were absorbed in football and other video games. — AFP

ECONOMY
WORLD

Resilient holiday consumption highlights China's economic vitality – Tourism reps

The surge in tourism was fueled by the alignment of the Mid-Autumn Festival and the National Day holiday, creating an extended eight-day holiday period.

Tourists visit a scenic spot in Sanya, south China's Hainan Province, 1 October 2023. As a popular tourist destination, Sanya is seeing a tourism boom during the National Day holiday. **PHOTO: GUO CHENG/XINHUA**

BENEATH the warm autumn sun, expansive mountains roll out with camel caravans and tourists extending for miles at the Yueya Spring scenic spot in the city of Dunhuang, northwest China's Gansu Province.

According to statistics from the municipal department of culture and tourism, over the eight-day holiday that ended on Friday, Dunhuang welcomed 667,700 tourists, marking an increase of over tenfold compared to the previous year.

"Approximately 200,000 tourists experienced the beauty of the northwestern landscape in the Mingsha Mountain and the Yueya Spring, a crescent-shaped lake surrounded by giant sand dunes," said Wang Youxia, deputy general manager of Dunhuang Mingsha Mountain and Yueya Spring Tourism Development Co., Ltd.

The eight-day holiday, featured by the unique alignment of the Mid-Autumn Festival and the National Day holiday this year, fostered a vibrant festive ambiance. It unleashed people's enthusiasm for travel and reflects China's economic vitality.

SWARMS OF TOURISTS

A daily average of 57.28 million passenger trips were made during the holiday, surging 57.1 per cent from the National Day holiday last year. From 29 September to 6 October, the number of passenger trips came in at 458 million, the Ministry of Transport said Saturday.

During the holiday, Beijing hosted 11.88 million visitors, up 12.9 per cent compared to 2019, according to the municipal culture and tourism bureau. The city's total tourism revenue during the period reached 15.57 billion yuan (2.16 billion US dollars), doubling the number over last year and up 21.9 per scent compared to the figures from 2019. — Xinhua

Luxembourg, EU's richest country, grapples with housing crisis

The housing crisis in Luxembourg is a significant concern and is influencing the political landscape as the country goes to the polls.

LUXEMBOURG'S residents may be classified as the wealthiest in the European Union, but the sky-high cost of buying or renting a home in the country has made living there nearly impossible for some.

The crisis has become the number one concern in the Grand Duchy of 660,000 people — smaller than Rhode Island, the smallest US state — as it goes to the polls on Sunday.

Pascale Zaourou, a teacher and mother of three children, had to wait five years before being able to access coveted social housing.

"On the private market, renting an apartment with two rooms costs at least 2,000 euros — it's difficult with only one income," she told AFP at a recent demonstration in Luxembourg City.

"Affordable housing is scarce, especially for young people and single-parent families," she said.

Renting a two-room apartment in the private market can cost at least 2,000 euros, making it difficult for single-income households. **PHOTO: AFP**

Antoine Paccoud, a researcher at the Housing Observatory, which compiles data guiding government policy, backed up that sentiment.

"More and more Luxembourgers are crossing the border to live in Germany, Belgium or France just because rents and property prices are lower," he said.

The situation is jarring for a country with a flourishing economy based around financial services.

Net average earnings for a single worker in Luxembourg were 47,000 euros ($49,000) annually in 2022, according to estimates from the EU's statistics agency — the highest in the bloc. — AFP

US logs fastest hiring pace in months

THE hiring pace in the US remains strong, especially in sectors like leisure, hospitality, government, and healthcare. Despite efforts to cool the economy, such a robust job market suggests potential dilemmas for the Federal Reserve.

US employers stepped up their hiring pace unexpectedly in September while unemployment held steady, government data showed on Friday, adding pressure on policymakers seeking to cool the economy.

The US economy added 336,000 jobs last month in the highest surge since January, and the jobless rate was unchanged at 3.8 per cent, said the Labour Department. — AFP

The world's biggest economy added 336,000 jobs in September, while August job gains were revised upwards as well according to the Labour Department. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

Canada firm on online news act, but 'optimistic' of Google buy-in

Google said it continues to have "serious concerns" with the act and called on Ottawa to consider redrafting it. **PHOTO: AFP**

CANADA "will not back down" in the face of tech giants' opposition to a new law requiring companies like Google and Meta to pay publishers for news content, Heritage Minister Pascale St-Onge said Friday.

She added that she was "optimistic" that Google would come around, while Meta continues to take a hard line against the bill.

But in a release late Friday, Google said it continues to have "serious concerns" with the act and called on Ottawa to consider redrafting it.

The Online News Act builds on similar legislation introduced in Australia and aims to support a struggling Canadian news sector that has seen a flight of advertising dollars and hundreds of publications closed in the last decade. "We've seen two different types of reactions," St-Onge told press bosses gathered in Toronto for a media conference. — AFP

Finland-Estonia gas pipe shut after suspected leak

FINLAND'S natural gas grid operator announced Sunday the shutdown of a pipeline from Estonia because of a suspected leak, halting flows for the country's only remaining pipeline following the halt of Russian imports.

"Based on observations, it was suspected that the offshore pipeline between Finland and Estonia was leaking," the state-owned Gasgrid said in a statement.

It said that it noticed "an unusual drop in pressure" in the Balticconnector pipeline overnight, and that it is investigating along with its Estonian counterpart Elering. Gasgrid added that the Finnish gas system was stable, with supply secured through a floating liquefied natural gas terminal (LNG) in Inkoo.

Commissioned in 2019, the Balticconnector has been the only gas import channel to Finland, apart from LNG, since Russian imports were halted in May 2022, following Moscow's invasion of Ukraine.

Russia stopped supplying gas after Finland refused to pay in rubles, a condition imposed on "unfriendly countries" — including EU member states — as a way to sidestep Western financial sanctions against Russia's central bank. — AFP

Major airlines cancel dozens of flights to Tel Aviv

MAJOR airlines cancelled dozens of flights to Tel Aviv this weekend after Palestinian militant group Hamas launched a surprise large-scale attack against Israel.

On the arrivals board at Tel Aviv's Ben Gurion airport American Airlines, Air France, Lufthansa, Emirates, Ryanair and Aegean Airlines were among those pulling flights.

However airport authorities did not stop commercial air links with Eilat, Israel's second international airport and tourist destination on the Red Sea.

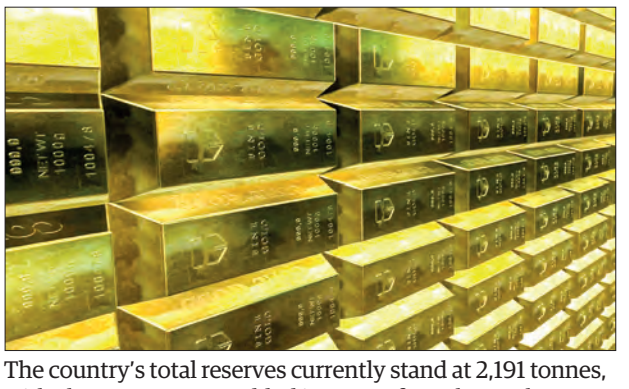
"Given the current security situation in Tel Aviv, Lufthansa is cancelling all flights to and from Tel Aviv up until and including Monday, a spokesman for the German carrier told AFP.

The airline was "monitoring the security situation in Israel," he added.

Passengers look at a departure board at Ben Gurion Airport near Tel Aviv, Israel, on 7 October 2023, as flights are canceled because of the Hamas surprise attacks. **PHOTO: GIL COHEN-MAGEN/AFP**

Brussels Airline, part of the Lufthansa group, also cancelled its Tel Aviv flights. Air France said it had halted Tel Aviv flights "until further notice". "Commercial measures are in place, allowing customers to postpone or cancel their trip free of charge", an Air France spokesman said.— AFP

China raises gold reserves for eleventh straight month



The country's total reserves currently stand at 2,191 tonnes, with about 217 tonnes added in a run of purchases that started in November 2022. **PHOTO: SPUTNIK**

CHINA has increased its gold reserves for an 11th month in a row, according to official data released by the country's central bank.

The report shows that the volume of the precious metal held by the People's Bank of China soared by 840,000 troy ounces in September, an equivalent of 26 tonnes of bullion. The country's total reserves currently stand at 2,191 tonnes, with about 217 tonnes added in a run of purchases that started in November 2022. In September, Huang Jun, an analyst at financial trading platform FXTM, was quoted by Chinese media as saying that, "It is very likely for the People's Bank of China to further boost its gold reserves." — SPUTNIK

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V MTT SAISUNEE VOY.NO. (020N)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V MTT SAISUNEE VOY.NO. (020N)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-10-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S REGIONAL CONTAINER LINES

CLAIMS DAY NOTICE
M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (204N/S)

Consignees of cargo carried on **M.V ISEACO GENESIS VOY.NO. (204N/S)** are hereby notified that the vessel will be arriving on **9-10-2023** and cargo will be discharged into the premises of **AWPT** where it will lie at the consignee's risk and expenses and subject to the byelaws and conditions of the Port of Yangon.

Damaged cargo will be surveyed daily from 8 am to 11:20 am and 12 noon to 4 pm to Claim's Day now declared as the third day after final discharge of cargo from the Vessel.

No claims against this vessel will be admitted after the Claims Day.

Phone No: **2301185**

Shipping Agency Department
Myanma Port Authority

Agent For:

M/S NEW GOLDEN SEA LINES

ROLLING UPDATES
WORLD

Hong Kong raises typhoon alert, cancels school classes

As a result of the typhoon warning, schools and flights in Hong Kong were canceled. The warning signifies winds of 63 kilometres per hour (40 mph) or higher.

People crossing Des Voeux Road West try to fend off strong winds as Typhoon Koinu nears South China's Hong Kong on 8 October 2023. **PHOTO: SHAMIM ASHRAF / CHINA DAILY**

THE Hong Kong Observatory issued an upgraded T8 hurricane emergency on Sunday as Typhoon Koinu approached, with schools and flights canceled in the city and winds of 63 kph (40 mph) or higher.

The warning was issued at 12:40 pm local time [04:40 GMT].

"The No. 8 Northeast Gale or Storm Signal is in force. This means that winds with mean speeds of 63 kilometres per hour or more are expected from the northeast quarter. At 5 pm, Typhoon Koinu was centred about 70 kilometres south of Hong Kong Observatory," the observatory said.

The Hong Kong Education Bureau has suspended classes in schools due to the level issued.

"Schools should implement contingency measures to ensure the safety of students," the bureau said.

Earlier in the day, the local media reported that the typhoon had disrupted flights to and from the city's airport. As of Sunday morning, at least 70 flights to or from Hong Kong had been canceled, the report said. — SPUTNIK

UN forum on internet governance begins in Kyoto, focus on AI

The forum in Kyoto focuses on internet policy issues, particularly related to AI and disinformation, and aims to contribute to international rule-making in these areas.

A UN forum on public policy issues regarding the internet began in Kyoto on Sunday with focus on artificial intelligence and measures against disinformation.

The results of the discussions at the Internet Governance Forum scheduled through Thursday will be utilized for the Hiroshima AI Process, in which the Group of Seven industrialized nations will establish rules on AI-related topics.

Digital Minister Taro Kono attended as a panelist for a discussion titled "Understanding 'Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT),'" where he emphasized the need for more nations to join the dialogue.

Digital Minister Taro Kono (C) speaks at the Internet Governance Forum in Kyoto on 8 October 2023. **PHOTO: KYODO**

About 6,000 people from government, business and educational facilities are expected to attend the over 300 scheduled talks about cybercrime and the information gap born from differences in internet availability, among other topics. One session will look at measures against fake AI-generated video and audio that may be disseminated on social media. — Kyodo

Hunter Biden claims immunity, seeks dismissal of federal gun charges

HUNTER Biden, the businessman son of US President Joe Biden, has pleaded not guilty to federal gun charges, telling the judge he would seek their dismissal due to an earlier plea agreement.

The charges allege Biden lied to the US Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) by claiming he had no addiction, when he was actually struggling with a cocaine habit. Biden faces a maximum of 25 years in prison if convicted on all three charges. Officials further argue that special counsel David Weiss was only "permitted to bring" one charge against Biden: the misdemeanor tax charges that have already been dismissed as a consequence of the collapse of the plea deal. — SPUTNIK

New Japan air force space office to promote business collaboration

THE Japan Air Self-Defence Force has opened an office in Tokyo to share information on outer space with businesses and research institutions.

The 2 October launch of the Japan Space Collaboration and Innovation Office is part of the country's effort to boost defense capacity in space, where competition among major powers such as the United States, China and Russia has been intensifying.

The office will be staffed by several ASDF members who will be there to exchange views on fast-developing private-sector space technologies and gain knowledge about the biggest advances, the ASDF said.

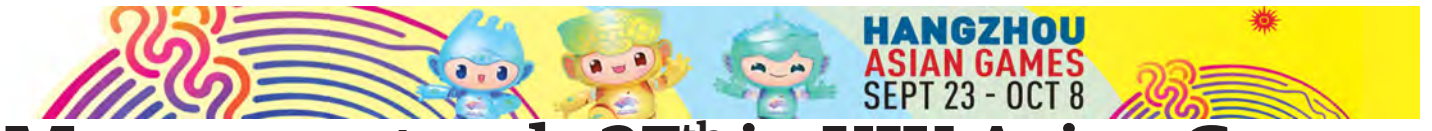
"We'd like to utilize the private sector's technologies in the defense sector and enhance our capability through public-private cooperation," said Gen Hiroaki Uchikura, chief of staff of the ASDF, at a press conference in late September.

"We will reflect the acquired knowledge in the introduction of new defense equipment," he added.

The office is located in a skyscraper in the capital's Toranomon district, where many space startups and research institutions have opened offices.

The location will be used "for the time being," with the rent for six months running at about 13 million yen ($87,100), according to Uchikura. — Kyodo

SPORTS



Myanmar stands 27th in XIX Asian Games

This photo taken on 8 October 2023 shows the closing ceremony of the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou, east China's Zhejiang Province. **PHOTO: XINHUA**

Hosted by China, the XIX Asian Games closing ceremony was held at the Olympic Stadium in Hangzhou on 8 October. At the closing event, the Asian Games flag is handed over to 2026 host Japan.

The XIX Asian Games were held from 19 September to 8 October, with participation of more than 10,000 athletes from more than 40 countries. The Myanmar sports contingent participated in the competition and took the 27th position with one gold and two bronze medals.

Host China took the first place with 201 gold medals, 111 silver medals and 71 bronze medals, followed by Japan with 52 gold medals, 67 silver medals and 69 bronze medals, and South Korea ranked the third with 42 gold medals, 59 silver medals and 89 bronze medals.

The Myanmar sports team competed in seven sports at the Asian Games, and the Myanmar Sepak Takraw team won one gold medal and the Myanmar traditional rowing team secured two bronze medals. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

The president of the FIFA presented a souvenir to U Zaw Zaw, the president of the Myanmar Football Federation, who is the senior vice president of the Asian Football Confederation. **PHOTO: MFF**

MFF attends AFC MAs & RAs Presidents' and General Secretaries' Conference 2023

THE AFC MAs & RAs Presidents' and General Secretaries' Conference 2023 was held on 7 and 8 October in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

The conference was attended by U Zaw Zaw, the president of the Myanmar Football Federation, who is the senior vice president of the Asian Football Confederation, and the delegation of the Myanmar Football Federation.

Saudi Arabia's bid to host the 2034 World Cup, FIFA international competitions and Asian regional competitions and football development programmes were discussed by the Asian Football Confederation during the conference. — Ko Nyi Lay/KZL

Japan looks to youth at Paris Olympics after mixed Asian Games

Japan's Hinano Kusaki competes in the women's skateboard. **PHOTO: AFP**

JAPAN is looking to its young talent to impress at next year's Paris Olympics after finishing a distant second in the Asian Games medals table to hosts China. Japan won 52 golds in Hangzhou and 188 medals overall, down on their haul from the previous Asian Games, in Jakarta in 2018. They were well behind China's record-setting 201 golds. But chef de mission Mitsugi Ogata said Sunday that Japan's young athletes in recently added Olympic sports can do the business in Paris. "One reason why we are happy with our athletes' performance is that we qualified for the Paris Olympics in many events," he said. — AFP

Record-breaking China set to close biggest Asian Games

HOSTS China finished with a record 201 gold medals as the curtain comes down on two weeks of triumphs and tears at the Asian Games in Hangzhou on Sunday. The biggest Asiad ever will wrap up later in the day with a closing ceremony at the 80,000-capacity Olympic stadium, with China handing over to Japan for 2026.

The Games normally happen every four years but Nagoya-Aichi has a shorter run-up because Hangzhou was postponed by a year due to China's now-abandoned zero-Covid measures.

Chinese Taipei's Gu Shiau-shuang won the final gold when she successfully defended her title in the women's karate -50kg kumite class.

But it was the hosts who dominated the overall medals table, their 201 golds beating the 199 they collected at Guangzhou 2010.

Their exploits across the 40 sports at the Games reinforced China's status as Asia's sporting superpower, topping the medals table at every Asian Games since 1982. With about 12,000 athletes in total, this was the biggest Asian Games in history. Organizers will congratulate themselves on a job well done, in what was China's return to staging a major sporting event following the pandemic. Crowds waving mini Chinese flags regularly filled up the 54 venues. "Technically we have had one of the finest Asian Games ever," said Olympic Council of Asia acting director general Vinod Kumar Tiwari. — AFP

The Asian Games in Hangzhou witnessed some world-class performances. **PHOTO: AFP/FILE**

ROLLING UPDATES WORLD

Hong Kong raises typhoon alert, cancels school classes

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Israeli troops at an undisclosed location on the border with the Gaza Strip on 8 October 2023. **PHOTO: AFP**

Israel battles Hamas as PM warns of 'long and difficult war'

The involvement of multiple groups in the conflict, along with the geopolitical dynamics of the Middle East, adds complexity to the situation and may have broader regional implications.

ISRAELI forces battled holdout Hamas fighters and pounded targets in the Gaza Strip Sunday as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu warned of a "long and difficult" war ahead sparked by the Palestinian militant group's massive surprise attack.

The Israeli army said tens of thousands of soldiers were deployed to fight militants in southern desert regions near the coastal enclave, to rescue Israeli hostages and then evacuate the entire region within 24 hours.

"We'll reach each and every community till we kill every terrorist in Israel," vowed military spokesman Daniel Hagari, a day after hundreds of Hamas fighters crossed into Israel using vehicles, boats and even motorised paragliders.

"Our mission for the upcoming 24 hours is to evacuate all residents" from communities around the Gaza Strip, he told journalists amid the fighting that has left hundreds dead on both sides.

Israel also came under attack from the north on Sunday when Lebanon's Hezbollah movement launched missiles and artillery shells "in solidarity" with the unprecedented Hamas offensive.

Israel was shocked when Gaza's rulers Hamas launched a multi-pronged assault at dawn Saturday with thousands of rockets and ground, air and sea forces, attacking and infiltrating Israeli towns and kibbutz communities.

The worst fighting in decades has killed more than 200 Israelis and wounded over 1,000, leaving bodies of civilians strewn on roads, while on the Gaza side at least 313 have died and over 1,700 were reported wounded. — AFP

EASING ENERGY SHORTAGES

Putin launches Russian gas shipments to Uzbekistan

RUSSIAN Vladimir Putin on Saturday announced the start of gas supplies to Uzbekistan via Kazakhstan, a boost for Russia's industry hit by a flurry of Western sanctions over the offensive in Ukraine.

Despite being home to a wealth of natural resources including gas, the Central Asian country of Uzbekistan has faced energy shortages.

Moscow meanwhile relies heavily on energy revenues but has seen export plummet amid since the offensive.

"This is the largest trilateral energy project" between the three ex-Soviet countries, Putin said, after formally launching the shipment.

He was hosting a meeting in Moscow with his Uzbek and Kazakh counterparts, Shavkat Mirziyoyev and Kassym-Jomart Tokayev.

"The timely implementation of such… project shows that Russia, Kazakhstan, and Uzbekistan are capable of tackling the most complex and ambitious tasks," Putin said.

"Kazakhstan will be able to solve the issue of gasification of its northern and eastern regions" while Uzbekistan will "gain another source of energy". Putin added that the leaders would during the afternoon discuss further cooperation in the energy sector as a whole.

Russia's offensive against Ukraine has rattled nerves in Central Asian nations, including Kazakhstan, which has sought to distance itself from Moscow.

But the former Soviet states retain close political and economic ties with Russia. — AFP

Death toll from 'unprecedented' Afghan quakes doubles to 2,000

The magnitude 6.3 earthquake and subsequent aftershocks caused significant damage, with over 1,300 homes collapsing in hard-to-reach areas located 30 kilometres northwest of Herat, the provincial capital.

THE death toll from a series of earthquakes in western Afghanistan rose sharply again on Sunday to more than 2,000, with nearly 10,000 injured, as rescue workers dug through razed villages for vanishing signs of life.

More than 1,300 homes were toppled when Saturday's magnitude 6.3 quake — followed by eight strong aftershocks — jolted hard-to-reach areas 30 kilometres (19 miles) northwest of the provincial capital of Herat, according to officials.

In rural Zinda Jan district, dozens of households were reduced to jumbles of broken masonry, where makeshift rescue teams dug trenches in the hope of unearthing survivors. — AFP

The death toll from a series of earthquakes in western Afghanistan has risen sharply to more than 2,000 people, with nearly 10,000 reported as injured. **PHOTO: AFP**